A CONTENT ANALYSIS ON THE RECONSTRUCTION OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN MOBILE GAME ADVERTISING

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Abstract - The digital game industry, which has developed since the 1960s, has been able to be played in mobile devices with the development of information technologies. Advances in new media technologies have led to the birth of mobile devices and the ability to play digital games on mobile platforms. In this way, mobile games have started to take place in daily life. Especially mobile games targeting the young population aim to attract the attention of the target audience with their advertisements on other smart phone applications. Today, due to the fact that the spread of smart phones, the mass playing on the mobile platform has increased. In the face of this increasing demand, game producers use advertising images prepared by using different female representations on social media platforms (Youtube, Twitch, Facebook, Instagram) or other mobile games in order to increase the number of users and attract new players. It is thought that male and female stereotypes, which are thought to take place in mobile games played online, have an effect on the gender identity of the individual. It can be said that the messages conveyed to users visually and in writing in online mobile games used as a socialization tool have masculine and feminine characteristics. Therefore, mobile gaming companies that use advertising attractiveness reflect the gender ideology while doing this. Especially when this study is examined on the basis of gender, it questions how gender is reproduced by using the image of women in mobile game ads. Mobile games that can be downloaded on the mobile platform with the deliberate sampling method, which are highly popular and that use female characters in their advertisements were selected and content analysis was made through the advertisements they used.

Keywords - Mobile Game, Advertising and Woman, New Media Advertising, Woman Representation, New Media Technologies

I. INTRODUCTION

The digital and mobile game industry has become one of the industries that are rapidly developing and taking their place in the market in the world and in Turkey. The sector volume, which is growing day by day with the effect of digitalization, makes it necessary to examine the production, labor and workforce processes in this field. The entertainment industry, which has now replaced the Hollywood cinema with digital and mobile games, has become a sectoral superiority. According to the Global Game Market report published by Newzoo (2019), the size of the game market in the world has been determined as approximately 140 billion dollars. This includes both desktop digital games and mobile games played via smartphones. At the beginning of the countries that dominate the game market in the world; China with 36.5 billion Dollars, USA with 35.5 billion Dollars and Japan with 18.6 billion Dollars (Newzoo, 2019).

The place of digital games in our daily life is increasing day by day. The concept of technology-oriented game developing day by day; appears as desktop games, mobile games and video games. It is known that digital games create new social worlds and environments due to their collective nature and thus help learning through combining thinking, social communication and technology. At this point, not only for the purpose of entertaining or teaching the digital game industry, but also the social structure and the ways of representing gender have a very important place. Especially when the game industry is examined in terms of users, it is seen that the industry is not only focused on the young population, but also used by adults. Almost all games have female characters. There are forms of representation of female characters belonging to game genres.

In all games, there is a goal that directs the main characters and some tasks that the user has to accomplish in order to achieve this goal. Considering the strength of the characters, their physical strength, their defensive abilities based on strength, their intelligence, and their beauty, it is seen that the characters are generally designed in a male-dominated manner (Kaya, 2013). In this study, it is aimed to examine how the representations of women in mobile games and game advertisements are constructed through 3 very popular mobile game advertisements, due to the spread of smartphones and the easy accessibility of mobile games by users.

II. LITERATURE

2.1. Woman Representation In The Digital Game Industry

Generally, women can see themselves in mobile games with the effect of their physical appearance and their position in society. Contrary to the general belief, the influence and interest of the female population in some mobile games is quite intense. In a study conducted by Statistan, 46% of the players who play the gun action game called PUGB produced by Tencent company for mobile devices are female

users. The top 5 women playing this game in the world are in India (www.statista.com, 2020). While women tend to distance themselves from the gaming industry, men tend to focus on content that is suitable for them, and this functions as "sexization".

Various applications are used to construct the identity of the player as "natural" masculine. The gaming industry plays an important role in this process by creating, marketing and thus reproducing its products in the light of a predominantly male audience (Shaw, 2013: 27). According to Schut (2006), games continue to create fertile symbolic resources for men to form gender identities that show that the discourse surrounding digital gaming culture is stereotypically masculine (Duggan, 2015). From this point of view, by this time, men are more likely to describe themselves as gamers than women. This male dominance in my digital gaming culture makes it difficult for women who are interested in games to integrate their membership as both women and gamers into their own self-perceptions at the same time. Although each individual has multiple identities, it seems that the identity structure of the female actors overlaps little with them, forcing them to negotiate complex subject positions (Roccas & Brewer, 2002: 88-106). Still, few studies have empirically explored exactly how women's gender identity relates to gamer identities. In addition, most of the quantitative studies only use gender as a demographic variable to indicate the general differences between male and female gamers (De Grove, Courtois & Van Looy, 2015: 346-361). It is argued that it is somehow connected but not explicitly limited, making gender a prototypical feature to assume player identity. The positive distinctiveness and homogeneity of "being an actor" is threatened when someone is seen as "non-prototypical" like female actors. On the other hand, highly prototypical group members contribute to in-group favourites. For this reason, prototypicality helps to see both themselves and others in different ways and to create positive feelings about oneself as a result of this social comparison (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2001: 510-517).

The media supports stereotypes, behavioral patterns and masculine feminine models of the concept of gender within the messages conveyed to individuals. Feminine and masculine qualities attributed to women and men are stereotyped features, and in this context, these features also constitute gender stereotypes. The concept of gender is not only a cultural and sociological issue, but also a subject that concerns many social science fields. Among these areas, the advertising area also comes to the fore with issues such as gender discrimination and gender representation. An example is the more masculine representation of men in advertisements, on the contrary, the presentation of women as a more emotional stereotype. (Sabuncuoglu, 2006).

Women are often featured in advertisements for two reasons. The first of these is because they are the target audience of the advertisement, and the second is for the purpose of influencing and persuading the male population. Looking at the stereotypes of women presented in advertisements, beautiful, attractive and young women; They are divided into four groups as married woman, mother woman, old woman and working woman (Elden, 2006). In advertisements where men are the target audience, women are shown as naked and brave, displaying their bodies. If the advertised product or game aims to impress men, the presentation of the female body is used to arouse sexual interest in men and to identify these reactions with the brand. Based on this understanding, mobile game ads with a male target audience and using a female image are very popular. Mobile game ads, which are positioned only on the female body and beauty, are presented to the society through social media channels. Mobile games that want to attract not only male target audience but also female players, generally try to reach mobile gamers by using strong and beautiful women images in their advertisements and expanding their target audience.

III. METHOD

The research is a descriptive research in survey model. In this study, descriptive scanning model was used since mobile game advertisements were tried to be analyzed. Content analysis was used while analyzing the games selected for the study as a sample. Especially when this study examines on the basis of gender, it questions how gender is reproduced by using female images in mobile game advertisements. Mobile games that can be downloaded on the mobile platform with the intentional sampling method, have high popularity and use female characters in their advertisements were selected and content analysis was made using the descriptive scanning method on the advertisements they used.

IV. RESULTS

4.1. Mafia City

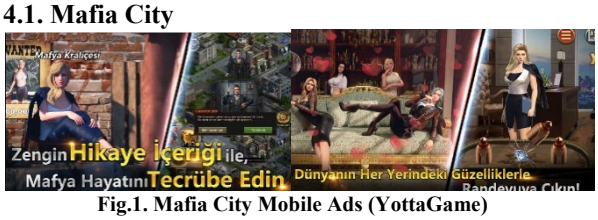


Fig.1. Mafia City Mobile Ads (YottaGame)

The mobile game called Mafia City, which includes strategy and role-playing elements developed by Yotta Games for Androids and App store, has become a mobile game that has reached more than 50 million downloads since its release. When the advertisement images of the game are examined, especially in terms of female representation, it is an indication that the woman wants to take on a

masculine structure when we look at the dressing style, gestures and mimics, and sitting style of the female character drawn in the first image. In particular, hanging his jacket over his shoulder was used as a reference to the traditional "mafia" type. The wanted poster with a picture of herself hanging on the wall behind it and the woman posing in front of the poster very confidently are shown as a representation of a brave woman with self-confidence. An attempt was made to create an attractive and courageous woman image, who displayed a masculine appearance with the way she sat cross-legged on the chair. The fashion of the dressing style and the well-groomed appearance of a woman fit the definition of a modern and self-confident woman. This image is also used to attract the attention of the male target audience and download the game. For this reason, it was especially thought that the female character used should be beautiful and attractive. The use of images with strong women and men due to the nature of the game is an example of the effort to achieve harmony with the scenario of the game. The women in the third image, their dressing styles, sitting styles, gestures and mimics, and the house they live in are indicators. Their clothing styles are fashionable and well-groomed women. In this display, it is presented to the women in the user, which criteria fit the definition of a modern and self-confident woman. The dressing style and sitting style of the woman lying on the sofa are presented especially for the male target audience to emphasize the sexual representation of women. Especially when the text "Go on a date with beauties all over the world" written under the image is presented with the advertisement, it becomes a game with a male target audience. The second female representation in the same image is presented as an ambitious and courageous representation of a modernly dressed, beautiful business woman on the right, holding a file and locking it towards the diamond opposite her. In addition, when looking at her environment, she is represented as a powerful woman with an office in a glassed plaza. When looking at the advertisement images of the game Mafia City in general, a completely sexist presentation was created through women. While doing this, he ensured that women are seen as a sexual object with the support of visual elements.

4.2. Kiss Of War



Fig.2. Kiss of War Mobile Ads (Tap4fun)

Tap4fun fermionic's mobile game called Kiss of War, which is a shooting action type mobile game for Android and Apple operating system phones, has more than 1 million downloads. The game named Kiss of War is about the participation of female characters selected and customized by the user, in an armed way. As a game preferred by female characters, it is quite diverse in terms of woman representation. The woman in the first image is shown caught in a conflict and tied to the wall. The torn clothes of the woman here and the bleeding from the corner of her mouth indicate that the woman was exposed to violence and needed to be rescued. It is shown that the woman is a warrior by the soldier clothes she wears. In the text under the image, "Save her, be the hero", it is stated that because the woman is represented in a helpless way, she should be saved and the person who does this will be the hero. The woman in the second image is dressed in a military uniform, similar to the outfit of the woman in the previous image. The fact that the woman is beautiful and attractive, and the user gives her a flower, gaining the trust of the character is represented as if the women immediately trust the person in exchange for a flower or gift. The text below the image reads "Conquer your officer's heart".

From this point of view, it is presented that women are always emotional, even if they are soldiers, and they surrender themselves in exchange for a flower. In addition, the clothes and styles of the female characters on the side were chosen in a way that would show their lines in the same way, and presented that the woman should be well-groomed, attractive and beautiful, even in war. In addition, when we look at the place where the woman is, it has elements of the "western" style living room culture. We see that almost all of the women represented in the advertisement of the game are good at many jobs and the necessity of looking beautiful, attractive and well-groomed, which is a must for female stereotypes, continues even under the umbrella of mobile games. The rifle in the hand of the female character in the fourth image and the self-confident state of her face both posed a brave and confident pose, and with her physical features and being a well-groomed woman, it shows that women should be well-groomed and beautiful no matter what. When we look at the advertisement images of the game called Kiss of War in general, the game has been handled as a sexual object and the game has been built within this context in order to attract and keep the target audience male users in the game. Presenting women in a militarily violent frame and showing them in a beautiful, well-groomed and modern line created a unique field for women's representation.

4.3. Game Of Sultans



Fig.3. Kiss of War Mobile Ads (Tap4fun)

The strategic role-playing mobile game made by Mechanist Internet Technologies company is played as a popular mobile game on Android and Apple store with more than 10 million downloads. The reason why it distinguishes it from other mobile games in particular is that it contains elements of traditional "Ottoman" culture. Not only with female representations, but also with male representations, Ottoman sultans, sultans and princes are frequently seen in the play. In the first image, it is seen that the women are around the prince's character. Looking at the woman on the left, it is told that she is holding a rose in her hand and exhibiting a beautiful and attractive image, and the woman's struggle to look beautiful to the prince. The presence of many female characters under the name of those in the harem in the back picture was used as an indicator of Ottoman harem culture. It is presented that women are only put in for the election of the prince and the purpose of all women is to attract the prince and make him happy. The sentence "I want to get lost in your eyes" of the woman in the other picture shows that the female character presents herself to the prince's liking and is beautiful and well-groomed only for him, showing that he belongs to a structure that progresses according to a male-dominated point of view. The clothes of the female characters are very stylish and designed in accordance with the fashion sense of the period. Looking at the woman standing next to the chief prince, she is shown as the prince's favorite or concubine because of her dress and crown. Due to the female character holding a book in her hand, it is presented in a more knowledgeable and self-improving way than the other characters, and this presentation shows that she is the prince's favorite concubine. The text under the image "Ambitious and passionate relationships" is presented in the game as a part of the palace intrigues due to the structure of the game.In the second image, it is seen that the female character is pregnant with her children and herself. Due to the structure of the game, the more children the female characters have, the stronger they are. The number of children seen in the advertisement and the levels written under the children are indicative of this situation. With the article "Strong heirs who will be heirs to the throne", she emphasized that the role of women in the game is only to make the sultan happy and to give birth to children. A boy and a girl standing on the left are depicted as a future sultan and prince. . It is shown that the level bar below, where the baby in the middle is presented as the heir of the future, increases as the baby progresses on the path of varicose veins and develops in line with the information he has learned. The fact that the little girl on the right is shy and the boy is presented in a confident and serious manner, shows that the roles of men and women in the game are stereotyped in the future, while the woman is represented as a wife, concubine, while the man is represented as the future sultan candidate is an indication of this. . The female character standing in the middle in a red dress is shown as the mother of her other children and she is happy to have an heir, and her place in the palace is strengthened because she is pregnant, showing that this character fulfills the role that was assigned to her and feels safe. As the name suggests, Game Of Sultans focuses on female characters. In the Ottoman period, it focused on the authority war between women and from this point of view, the female characters were presented only as an object that would please the sultan and give him a child. When we look at all the advertisement images, the fact that the female characters are generally in the bedrooms in the palace and they are only represented in the room shows that the freedom of women is limited and they have to act only with certain patterns. The game uses the concept of concubine especially for the male target audience, and thus progresses in line with the fantasies that the male ego wants to realize. There are quite a few elements that commodify women here.

V. CONCLUSION

Considering the way in which the gender phenomenon is reconstructed in the virtual environment and the way it is represented in mobile games created with a male-dominated perspective, which is the main question of the research, masculinity is superior; it has been concluded that femininity is presented in a weaker and weaker way. In this study; Cognitive and operational practices and how women are positioned in selected mobile game advertisements have been tried to be revealed through the visuals of some popular mobile games. In this context, it has been revealed that mobile games are not just games played for fun but on a simple mobile platform. Visual culture used by opinion leaders and governments that own the means of production, and mobile platforms as a new media tool can be considered. This platform maintains its existence in line with its own understanding of market conditions and consumption culture in the world of indicators. In this context, representations of men and women lose their value in the virtual reality phenomenon and images take the place of reality (Baudrillard, 2003). In the light of these indicators, which have a configurable framework, non-existent situations, images, roles are given to the memory of the society with new media tools in an artificial reality. Especially with mobile devices, these indicators that enter our home, our room, and our soul every day, are processed in our minds. As a result of this situation, the representation of the "ideal woman" emerges as physically exaggerated body representations, pursuit of perfection, and the secondary presentation of the woman. . These tools, which aim to recreate the female perception of the young population, which is the target audience of mobile games, are also very powerful in creating a false perception. In this context, it has been seen that the analyzed games are

sexist. Society also interferes with the freedom of individuals to define their own identity. It creates its own ideology in the mobile game and creates a new perception. With the gender ideology, the individual reinforces the female and male identity presented to him by internalizing it. In this way, the screenings and presentations developed based on the gender of men and women also emphasize discrimination against women. This situation has been included in our new living standards due to the importance and visibility of new media tools in our lives. In this context, mobile games, which are defined as new media tools and have an important place in the mobile game industry, realize a gender ideology with the inclusion of smartphones in our lives. Therefore, with this study, it has been revealed that mobile games are not only a means of entertainment, but are used as a tool to reproduce social differences such as race, language, religion, and gender in this sector.

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